

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims are 14-17, 20-22 and 24, with claims 18, 19, 23, and 25-27 having been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner as directed to a non-elected species. Reconsideration is expressly requested.

The Examiner indicated that a certified copy of priority application RM 2004 U 000179 filed in Italy on November 12, 2004, had not been received. Accordingly, Applicant submits herewith a certified copy of the priority document.

The Examiner rejected claim 16 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite in the recitation of "the first direction" in line 5 as lacking sufficient antecedent basis.

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 16 depends on claim 14, which expressly recites that the slider is suitable to translate according to "a first direction corresponding to a pivoting of the hinge". Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that there is

sufficient antecedent basis for the recitation of "the first direction" in claim 16, and Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

Claims "14-17" (presumably claims 14 and 16-17) were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,859,979 to *Egger et al.* The remaining claims under consideration by the Examiner were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Egger et al.* alone (claims 15, 20, and 21) or further in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,102,311 to *Martin et al.* (claims 22 and 24). Essentially the Examiner's position was that *Egger et al.* discloses the hinge recited in the claims except for features which are considered either within the skill of the art or taught by secondary reference to *Martin et al.*

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As set forth in claim 14, Applicant's invention provides a furniture hinge including a fixing arm for fixing to a piece of furniture, means for fixing to a door of the piece of furniture,

incorporating a cup, first and second rockers, forming an articulated quadrilateral and joining the fixing arm to the cup so as to allow reciprocal pivoting thereof, a connection element fixed to the first rocker, and damping means of the reciprocal pivoting. The damping means includes a slider controlled in translation by the connection element and suitable to translate according to a first direction corresponding to a pivoting of the hinge. The slider cooperates with kinematic means for motion conversion suitable to convert a translation motion of the slider into a damping pivoting motion.

The damping means include a housing separate from the cup and enclosing the slider, damping moving elements and the kinetic means for motion conversion and are provided with fast connection means to the cup so that the slider and the damping moving elements are suitable to be assembled with one another with the housing so that the damping means form a single element suitable to be fixed to one end of the cup in a single operation.

In this way, Applicant's invention provides a furniture hinge which has an alternative damping and braking device with respect to those known previously, which ensures improved

efficiency during the closing and/or opening operation of the doors or other parts of the piece of furniture without variations to the overall dimensions of standard hinges. With Applicant's furniture hinge arrangement, a modular structure is provided which considerably facilitates the construction and final assembly and allows optimization of the use of production lines.

None of the cited references discloses or suggests a furniture hinge including damping means that include a housing separate from a cup enclosing a slider, damping moving elements, and kinematic means for motion conversion and that are provided with fast connection means to the cup so that the slider and the damping moving elements are suitable to be assembled with one another with the housing so that the damping means form a single element suitable to be fixed to one end of the cup in a single operation.

The primary reference to *Egger et al.* discloses a hinge that lacks a damping means with a housing that is separate from the cup that encloses the slider, damping moving elements and kinematic means for motion conversion. Applicant's housing as recited in claim 14 can be a casing and base that are shown for

example as 14" and 26', respectively, in Applicant's FIG. 21. This casing can act as a lid so that in conjunction with the base, the damping device shown as 13" in FIG. 21 forms a single element that provides a modular construction for the damping device. In contrast, the damping device of the hinge in *Egger et al.* has only a base (6 in FIG. 4) that is screwed into the cup (5 in FIG. 4) for housing the slider, damping moving elements and kinematic means for translating motion. Thus, the damping device of *Egger et al.* cannot exist separately as a single element as Applicant's damping device as recited in claim 14 can. This ability of Applicant's damping means to be a single element separate from the hinge cup provides a modular construction that allows for much greater ease in manufacturing in comparison to the damping device of *Egger et al.*

The secondary reference to *Martin et al.* has been considered but is believed to be no more relevant. *Martin et al.* simply discloses a unitary, flexible plastic tie-strap adapted to be looped upon itself in adjusted self-locking relation. There is no disclosure or suggestion of a damping means including a housing separate from a cup incorporated in a means for fixing to a door of a piece of furniture, damping moving elements and

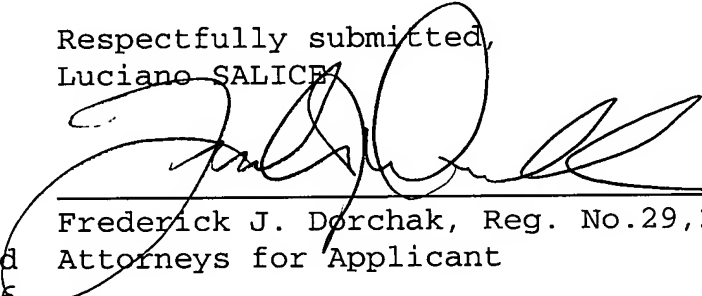
kinematic means for motion conversions as recited in Applicant's claim 14.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 14, together with claim 15-17, 20-22 and 24, which depend directly or indirectly thereon, contain patentable or unobvious subject matter.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed and that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,
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Enclosure: Certified copy of Italian Application
 RM 2004 U 000179

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on November 6, 2008.



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